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# Working Paper Series

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## **DISPUTED (DISCIPLINARY) BOUNDARIES. PHILOSOPHY, ECONOMICS AND VALUE JUDGMENTS**

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**DISPUTED (DISCIPLINARY) BOUNDARIES.  
PHILOSOPHY, ECONOMICS AND VALUE JUDGMENTS**

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to address the following two questions: a) what is the logic of the kind of discourse that seeks to found, demarcate or defend the autonomy or the boundaries of a discipline; b) why does this discourse, whether methodological, ontological or epistemological, sometimes turn into normative, dogmatic-excommunicating wrangles among disciplines, schools or scholars? I will argue that an adequate answer may be found if we understand: 1) disciplines as institutions and, therefore, as dogmatic systems, where scholars' discourse often takes the form of a legitimizing discourse regarding the founding Reference of their own discipline; 2) that scholars speak in the name of that very foundation, with which they closely identify; 3) that the issue of the legitimacy of a discipline cannot easily be separated from the issue of identity and, therefore, of a scholar's legitimacy; 4) that the excommunication may arise not only when the founding Reference is absolutized, but also as a form of self-defense of a scholar's identity-legitimacy. To understand these claims I will re-examine three paradigmatic positions: the methodological, ontological and epistemological considerations put forward by (and the debates between) Pareto, Croce and Einaudi – with specific reference to the demarcation between philosophy, economics and value-judgments.

**Keywords:** philosophy, economics, value-judgments, realism, nominalism, economist's discourse, dogmatics, disciplinary boundaries

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